

Ladders of Light

... a new Consitution for the UK

5 February - 3 April 2019



Salisbury
Cathedral

"As a child of the 70's, I have enjoyed the benefits of growing up and working in an environment where I felt a close connection to our European neighbours. I wanted my son to have the same experience. I worry for his future and the younger generations, facing a very different setup in which they have had no voice. Whatever my personal vote, I'm a pragmatist. If we are to become a distinct island again, then I to look to the people to create a just, equal and caring society." Mary Branson

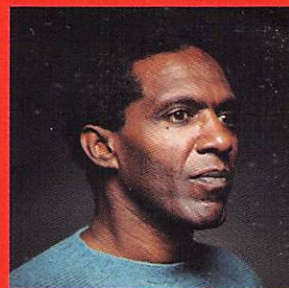
Mary Branson is an award-winning print maker, choreographer, mentor and public speaker but is best known for her large-scale conceptual light sculptures and installations. Her iconic 'New Dawn' 2016 sculpture in the Houses of Parliament is the first permanent piece of contemporary abstract art in the Palace of Westminster. She has created light and sound works for the London 2012 Olympics, The Magna Carta Memorial at Runnymede, Royal Holloway University and, most recently, the National Trust.

With a first-class honours degree in Fine Art from the Surrey Institute and an MA in Art and Space from Kingston University, she has held artistic residencies at Parliament, the British Council, Crisis, the National Trust and HM Prison service.

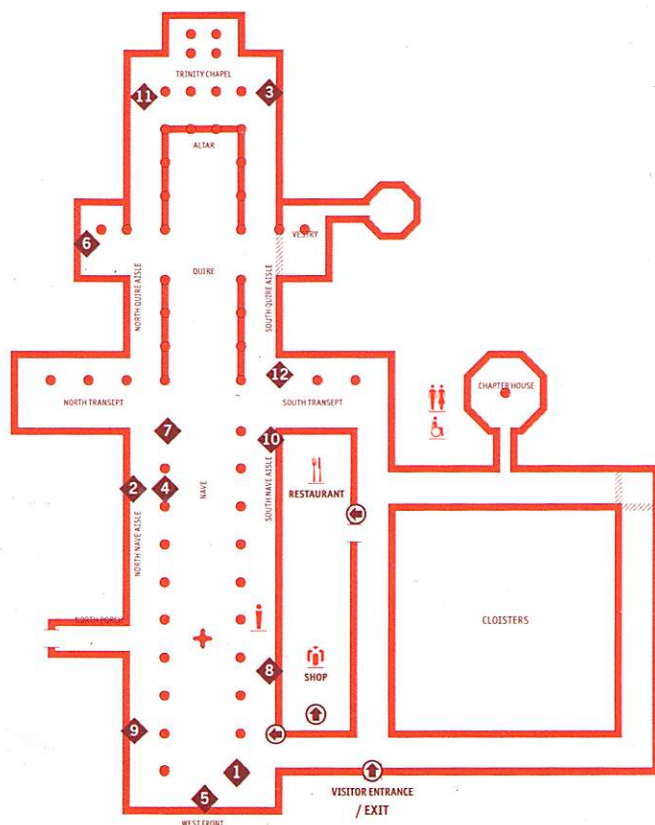


Lemn Sissay MBE is a poet, playwright and broadcaster. He has read his poetry all over the world and was the first poet commissioned to write for the London Olympics. His Landmark Poems can be found in public spaces from The Royal Festival Hall in London to The British Council Offices in Addis Ababa. Lemn was official poet for The FA Cup 2015 and his Desert Island Discs was pick of the year for BBC Radio 4 in 2015.

Lemn is Chancellor of The University of Manchester, Patron of The Letterbox Club, Canterbury's Poet Laureate and Trustee of The Foundling Museum and Manchester International Festival.



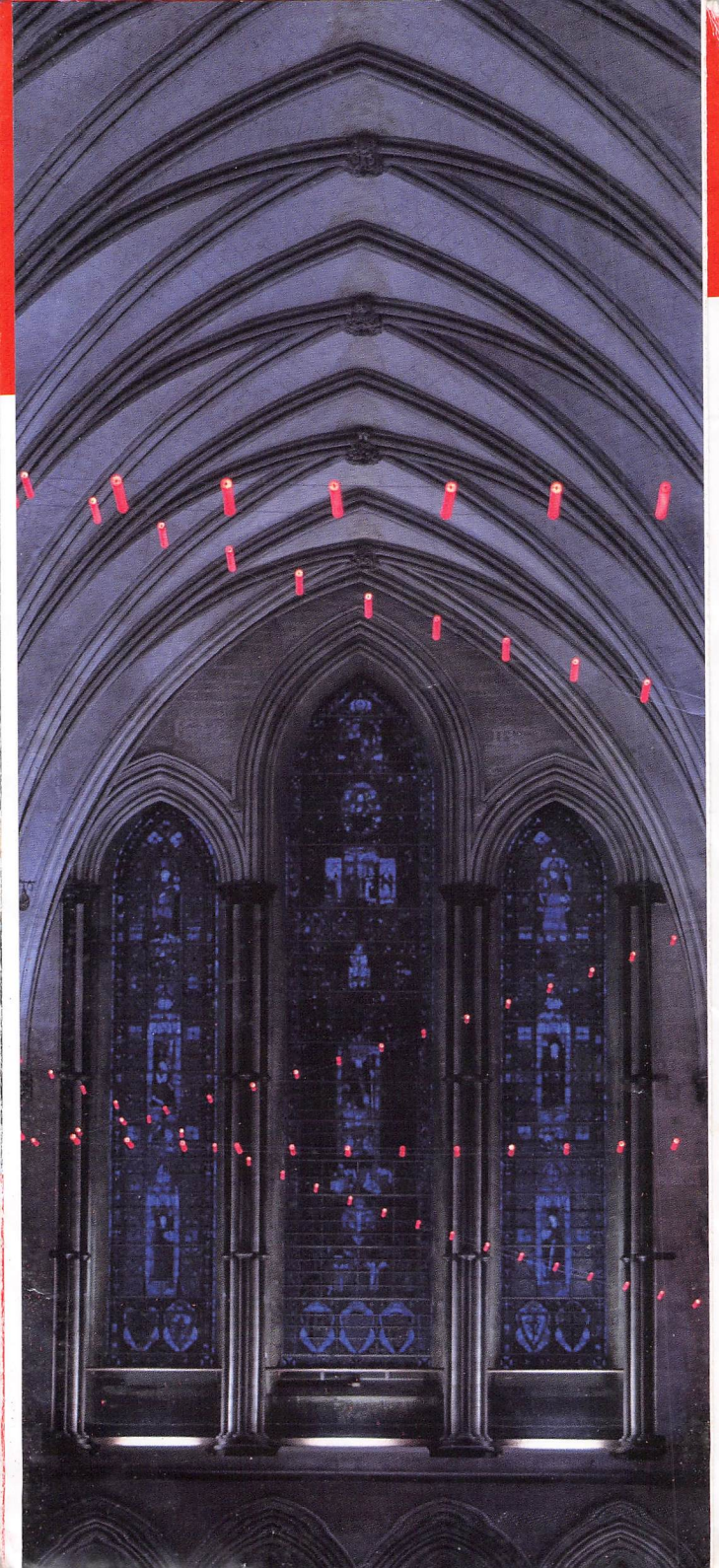
"My poetic 'charter' demands simple but powerful actions of the reader. Deeds that shape a new attitude to the vulnerable in our society. Just as Clause 30 of the 1215 Magna Carta was the precursor to our current jury system and Clause 40 ensures there is no imprisonment without trial, my hope is that the actions laid out in my 'charter' will change minds and ways. Above all I hope that Clause 9 of my poetic charter will become a central tenet of our post-referendum society, whatever form it takes." Lemn Sissay



MAGNILOQUENT CARTILAGE

1. Every private kiss will be followed by a public hug.
2. All public noises made to gain attention, including but not exclusive to British Rail horns, car horns, police sirens, cycle horns, ambulance sirens and doorbells will be the recordings of giggling babies.
3. All children in all educational institutions will exercise their right to learning without exams.
4. Citizens will invite an immigrant into their homes for one day per week.
5. We will gather tears throughout the year and make lakes of them.
6. Each year the seasons will be renamed. For example Spring could be Bruised Blossom, Summer could be Ripe Song, Autumn could be Mist filled Radiator and Winter could be Coal Fire.
7. Jellyfish will be banished from the seas of the British Isles.
8. All war anniversaries will be celebrated by festivals of forgiveness.
9. Government will be assessed above all on how it treats its child. The child in care.
10. Citizens will communicate without speaking or writing words for one day a week.
11. That we are all immigrants from the moment we migrated from the womb into the open air will be taught to all citizens in schools.
12. We will not hurt each other. We will hold each other.

See map for clause placements in the Cathedral.



These works by award-winning poet and broadcaster Lemn Sissay MBE and visual artist Mary Branson both ask us, playfully at times, to explore different perspectives on today's United Kingdom.

The installation reflects the fact that the Cathedral is the custodian of a 1215 Magna Carta, one of only four remaining copies in the world and the foundation stone of the UK's unwritten constitution. The Charter resulted from a conflict between the King and his barons. Today, the issues surrounding the European Union has divided communities, families and political parties alike.

In his new poem, **Magniloquent Cartilage**, Lemn rejects political speak, focusing instead on our individual responsibilities to one another. He challenges us to view the world from an alternative perspective, to try something different. His constitutional demands, built from within, are unexpected and surprising.

Mary Branson's compelling **Ladders of Light** installation is inspired by ideas of social mobility, equality and generosity, Mary's work both mirrors the grandeur and aspirations inherent in the Cathedral's Gothic architecture, and speaks of the fragility of human society.

Curator Jacqueline Creswell said: *"There is a tension between the two elements of this exhibition which reflects the state of our country today. Lemn Sissay's poem focuses on the individual. He asks that we change ourselves first and government afterwards. Mary's response is more direct: a bold representation of a society that empowers and connects, enabling all to flourish and succeed. The ladders of light are a metaphor for hope and aspiration, for movement up and down, crossing divides, overcoming barriers and laying a pathway to a more just society."*

This project was commissioned for Salisbury Cathedral by Sky Arts as part of Art 50, an initiative to fund 50 new pieces of art across the country and from all disciplines exploring what it means to be British.

skyartsart50.tv



This exhibition is part of a wider programme of events around these subjects.

Please visit our website for more information about our Salisbury Conversations (featuring Lemn Sissay as a panellist) scheduled for March 2019.

Salisbury Cathedral aims to showcase some of the best contemporary art and sculpture in this unique space.

Our pioneering visual arts programme enables us to reach out to a wider audience in a fresh, innovative way.

We rely on the generosity of artists and on charitable donations to continue to show these exhibitions. We would like to build a fund to secure the future of art at the Cathedral.

If you would like to help us by making a gift contact Jilly Wright at j.wright@salcath.co.uk or call her on 01722 555122.

Thank you to art champions Trevor and Susan Branch for their support.

Curated by Jacqueline Creswell, Salisbury Cathedral's Visual Arts Adviser.

Photography: Ash Mills

Grateful thanks from Mary to: Mat Clark, Colin Musson, Edd Jordan, Emma Brown, Jane Fairbanks, Sara Scott, Peter Smith, Mary Hainline, Paul Clark, Katy Hunter-Choat, Mags Hardwick, Barbara Hester, Jill and Peter Gulabov, Rosemarie Juliano, Cate Davey, Ben Clark, Pippa Vaughan, Jim Leonard, Julie Hoyle, Josie Davis and David Rayment at Sinclair and Rush, Jacqueline Creswell, Gary Price, Russell Cruse and Ricardo da Fonseca.

#LaddersofLight

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